REMARKS

In view of the above amendments and the following remarks, reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

I.   Amendments to the Claims

Claims 3 and 6 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter contained therein.

Further, independent claims 1, 13, 14 and 16 have been amended to clarify features of the invention recited therein and to further distinguish the present invention from the references relied upon in the rejections discussed below.

In addition, dependent claims 4 and 7 have been amended to remain consistent with the above-mentioned cancellation of claims 3 and 6 and the amendment of independent claim 1.

II.   Claim Objections

Claims 1, 13, 14 and 16 were objected to for reciting a limitation not described in the specification. Specifically, claims 1, 13, 14 and 16 were objected to for reciting "revoke a communication" and/or "revoking a communication," which is allegedly not described in the specification.

In view of the Examiner's objection, claims 1 and 13 have been amended to recite "operable to disconnect a communication," and claims 14 and 16 have been amended to recite "disconnecting a communication." Support for these amendments can be found, at least, on page 6, lines 17-20 of the specification.

As a result, since claims 1, 13, 14 and 16 now recite terminology described in the specification, withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) Rejection

Claims 1, 3-8 and 11-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of Vandergeest (U.S. 6,247,127) and Naor. These rejections are believed clearly inapplicable to independent claims 1, 8 and 13-17 and the claims that depend therefrom for the following reasons.

Amended independent claim 1 recites an apparatus including a revocation number judgment unit operable to judge validity of a revocation number obtained from a repository apparatus storing the revocation number. Further, claim 1 recites that the revocation number judgment unit judges the validity of the obtained revocation number by comparing the obtained revocation number with a past revocation number, the past revocation number being (i) obtained by the revocation number obtainment unit before the revocation number has been obtained, (ii) stored by the revocation number storage unit, and (iii) a criterion for judging the validity of the server certificate. Vandergeest and Naor, or any combination thereof, fails to disclose or suggest the above-identified distinguishing features, as required by independent claim 1.

Initially, please note that the above-described 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection acknowledges that Vandergeest fails to disclose or suggest the above-mentioned distinguishing features, as now recited in amended claim 1. In light of the above this rejection relies on Naor for teaching the above-mentioned features which are lacking from Vandergeest.

However, Naor merely teaches storing, updating and retrieving a Certificate Revocation

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List (CRL) that identifies certificates that are revoked (<u>see</u> page 2, section 2.1). More specifically, Naor teaches that a time stamp of a CRL is checked, and that the CRL is not used when the CRL has a time stamp that indicates a time that is older than the current time. Moreover, Naor teaches that a time stamp and an expiration period of a CRL are checked, and that the CRL is not used after the expiration period has expired (<u>see</u> pages 1 and 2).

Thus, in view of the above, it is clear that Naor teaches that the CRL is not used (e.g., determined to be invalid) when (i) the time stamp is older than a current time or (ii) the expiration period of expired, but fails to disclose or suggest judging the validity of the obtained revocation number by <u>comparing the obtained revocation number with a past revocation number</u>, the past revocation number being (i) obtained by the revocation number obtainment unit <u>before</u> the revocation number has been obtained, (ii) <u>stored</u> by the revocation number storage unit, and (iii) a <u>criterion for judging the validity of the server certificate</u>, as required by claim 1.

In other words, Naor teaches that when a CRL that is older than the current time or has a period that has expired, the CRL is discarded (i.e., not used), whereas claim 1 requires that the <u>past revocation number is not discarded</u> because the obtained revocation number is compared to the past revocation number that (i) was obtained <u>before</u> the revocation number was obtained, (ii) was stored in a number storage unit, and (iii) was a criterion for judging the validity of the server certificate, which is not disclosed or suggested by Naor.

Therefore, because of the above-mentioned distinctions it is believed clear that claim 1 and claims 4, 5 and 7 that depend therefrom would not have been obvious or result from any combination of Vandergeest and Naor.

Amended independent claim 8 recites an apparatus including a revocation number update

unit operable to (1) update a revocation number (stored in a storage unit) to a number that is larger than an identification number of a server certificate to be revoked. In addition, claim 8 recites an issuing unit operable to (2) issue a new server certificate including an identification number indicating a value that is equal to or larger than the revocation number (stored in the storage unit). Finally, claim 8 recites that, when the revocation number update unit updates the revocation number, the issuing unit (3) issues the new server certificate to another server apparatus that corresponds to a server certificate including an identification number indicating a value that is smaller than the updated revocation number. Vandergeest and Naor, or any combination thereof, fails to disclose or suggest above-identified distinguishing features (1)-(3), as required by independent claim 8.

Initially, please note that the above-described 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection acknowledges that Vandergeest fails to disclose or suggest the above-mentioned distinguishing features, as recited in amended claim 8. In light of the above this rejection relies on Naor for teaching the above-mentioned features which are lacking from Vandergeest.

However, as discussed above, Naor merely teaches that teaches that the CRL is not used when (i) the time stamp is older than a current time or (ii) the expiration period of expired (see page 2, section 2.1).

Thus, for reasons similar to those discussed above, it is apparent that Naor fails to disclose or suggest updating a revocation number (stored in a storage unit) to a number that is larger than an identification number of a server certificate to be revoked and issuing a new server certificate including an identification number indicating a value that is equal to or larger than the revocation number (stored in the storage unit), as required by claim 8.

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In addition, for reasons similar to those discussed above, it is also apparent that Naor fails to disclose or suggest issuing the new server certificate to another server apparatus that corresponds to a server certificate including <u>an identification number indicating a value that is smaller than the updated revocation number</u>, as recited in claim 8.

Therefore, because of the above-mentioned distinctions it is believed clear that claim 8 and claims 11 and 12 that depend therefrom would not have been obvious or result from any combination of Vandergeest and Naor.

Furthermore, there is no disclosure or suggestion in Vandergeest and/or Naor or elsewhere in the prior art of record which would have caused a person of ordinary skill in the art to modify Vandergeest and/or Naor to obtain the invention of independent claims 1 and 8. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 8 and claims 4, 5, 7, 11 and 12 that depend therefrom are clearly allowable over the prior art of record.

Amended independent claims 13, 14, 15, 16 and 17 are directed to a system, a communication method, an issuing method, a program, and a program, respectively and each recite features that correspond to the above-mentioned distinguishing features of independent claims 1 and/or 8. Thus, for the same reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that claims 13-17 are allowable over any combination of Vandergeest and Naor.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is submitted that the present application is now in condition for allowance and an early notification thereof is earnestly requested. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone to resolve any remaining issues.

Respectfully submitted,

Shinji HAMAI

/Andrew L. Dunlap/
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By:_____

Andrew L. Dunlap
Registration No. 60,554
Attorney for Applicant

ALD/led
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
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